

California GARDEN

FORTY-EIGHTH YEAR

SPRING, 1957

VOLUME 48, NO. 1

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SAN DIEGO

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The Seven Sisters, *Nolina bigelovi*, Joshua Tree National Monument, Calif.

Photograph by L. B. Dixon

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The Floral Building and library will be open every Tuesday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., to members and the public. Mrs. Kenneally will be available for consultation.

San Diego Floral Association Activities
Visitors Always Welcome

Wednesdays, March 6, 13, & 29,
Floral Bldg., 9:30 a.m.

Lectures on Practical Gardening by Ed. F. Roach, Instructor of Ornamental Hort., S. D. Jr. College
Followed by tour of Stanley Miller's Camellia Garden, Carlton's Orchid Nursery, and Mrs. H. O. Cosby's Rose Garden
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S.D.F.A. regular March meeting changed to **Friday, March 29, 1:30 p.m.**

Puppet Theatre, Palisades Bldg., Balboa Pk.
Speaker: Mrs. Paul Frenzel, of Glendale
National Chairman of Arrangement Judging Committee of National Garden Clubs, Inc.

Subject: Flower Arrangement.
Tea in Floral Bldg. following lecture
No admission fee to members
Guests and non-members, 90 cents.

Monday, March 25, April 29, May 27
. . . . 9:30 a.m.

Flower Arrangement Classes in Floral Bldg.
Instructor: Mrs. J. R. Kirkpatrick
Chairman: Mrs. Roland Hoyt. CY 6-2757

Tuesday, April 16 2 p.m.

Regular Meeting, Floral Bldg.
Speaker: Gordon Baker Lloyd
Subject: Continuous Bloom in the Flower Border

Saturday, April 13 10 a.m.

Walk Talk through Balboa Park
Conductor: C. I. Jerabek, formerly of Balboa Park Nursery
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Garden Clubs — Notice

Affiliate membership in the San Diego Floral Association is available to all garden clubs within the city limits of San Diego. Annual dues of \$10.00 entitles an affiliate to representation on the executive board of the Floral Association, two subscriptions to California Garden, and week-end flower shows in the Floral Building. An additional fee of \$15.00, for the building maintenance fund, entitles an organization to the use of

the building for meetings and to the use of another building in the park for a flower show. Garden clubs interested are asked to write a letter petitioning affiliate membership.

Membership in the San Diego Floral Association includes a subscription to California Garden. Classification of memberships: Annual, \$3.00; Family, \$5.00; Sustaining, \$5.00; Contributing, \$25.00; and Life Membership, \$100.00. Memberships and gifts are deductible from income tax.

California Garden

FORTY-EIGHTH YEAR

SPRING, 1957

VOL. 48, NO. 1

Growing Iris in San Diego

STEWART H. CARSE

Accredited Garden and Exhibition Judge of the American Iris Society

When one speaks of Iris, the picture that most often appears in the hearer's mind is that of the bearded or pogon iris, or, as the older of us would say, the "flags" of our childhood. In truth, this is but one of the species of iris, even though it is the most familiar to us in San Diego. Next, probably, would rank the apogon, or Beardless Iris, best characterized by the *Spurias* or *Butterfly Iris*, developed and hybridized to such a marked degree by the late Eric Nies of Hollywood.

Here in San Diego we are peculiarly fortunate in that our equable climate permits us to successfully grow many varieties of iris too tender for much of the rest of the country. But there is a reverse side to this in that the long drought, with which we have all become too familiar of late years, requires systematic irrigation to keep the rhizomes growing and the new shoots developing. To be sure of getting those iris which are already acclimated to our conditions, it is best to buy from growers developing their iris here in Southern California.

Your soil should be good. The ideal is a light red, loamy soil, neutral to slightly acid; a soil which drains easily and yet is not so porous that it will not retain a reasonable amount of plant food.

If your soil is too sandy, as for instance in certain parts of Crown Point, clay might be added to it to give body to your beds. On the

other hand, heavy clay may be lightened by the addition of sand or compost.

If your soil is excessively acid, use ground limestone or wood ashes to counteract it but if, and with our Colorado River water, this seems more likely, you find excessive alkali, use superphosphate or gypsum.

The time to do your major fertilizing is before planting, that is, when preparing the bed. The great majority of growers use inorganic fertilizers, some 40% of them, bone-meal, 20% Vigoro, Agricol, etc., and 10% superphosphate. Myself, I use all three.

The Vigoro I mix through the entire bed when preparing it. Then, as I plant, I mix a handful of Bone Meal in the soil which has been lifted and push it in over the roots. About Christmas time I loosen the soil around the plant and broadcast Superphosphate, which I soak into the ground, then cover. This last serves the double purpose of a fertilizer and a counter to excessive alkalinity.

The principal argument against the use of nitrogenous fertilizers is their admitted conduciveness to "soft rot" in bearded iris. This is not so apt to occur in areas where rainfall is light and humidity low. So, here in San Diego, if your soil is light, I believe you might safely plant iris in beds where dry screened manure has been incorporated in the soil, without any fear of an undue outbreak of "soft rot."

Now we come to planting. If your soil is light and sandy loam, by all means cover the rhizome anywhere from one-half inch to two inches deep. My own soil is heavy and in spite of all my efforts to change its disposition, it remains heavy. So I plant rhizomes at soil-level and find that best.

The best way to plant is to take out two shovels of earth diagonally away from a common center, thus leaving an undisturbed ridge between. Lay the rhizome on this ridge after first parting the roots so that they can be laid down the sloping cuts on each side of the ridge. Press down on the rhizome to set it at the level desired then pack the earth in from the sides to cover the roots. In that way no settling will occur under the rhizome itself while the spreading roots securely anchor the plant.

Another thing; if you have more than one rhizome of a variety and wish to establish a clump, be sure to plant with the fans back to back, facing outward. If you do the opposite, as nearly everyone does, you will eventually end up with a nice circle of young iris surrounding a center vacant of all but old, dead rhizomes.

Here in San Diego, there are two periods during which you may do either transplanting or new planting. Immediately after the flowering time, that is late May

or June and again during September before the rains come. Definitely not in July or August when the hot weather is on us. My own preference is September as by then new side-shoots are well established and, too, the rains will be coming at just about the right time to make good development.

Cultivation is a slight matter and consists only of clearing out weeds and keeping the ground clean by clearing all dead blades away. This last is a sanitary measure as well as aesthetic, since thus you lower the risk of furnishing a hiding place for pests and fungus microbes.

One thing to remember in weeding is that the iris sends out a perfect network of feeder roots only a few inches below the surface of the ground so PLEASE be gentle with that hoe when you are using it to weed.

In general, we are troubled by but few pests or diseases of iris here in San Diego.

Snails and Slugs are easily controlled by the use of Buggeta or Snarol. Planting in full sunlight rather than deep shade will eliminate White Fly. The very lack of excessive rainfall saves us from Soft Rot and, thus far, we are out-

side the area of infestation of Borer.

And, by the way, that last is another argument against going East of the Mississippi for your rhizomes. Borer infestation has now spread all the way from New England West to the Mississippi and South to the Carolinas.

There have been some cases of "Mustard Seed Fungus" here on the Coast but mostly in the North where the rainfall is much heavier. Heavy cold rains and fog are very favorable to the spread of this fungus. Semesan in liquid solution has been found effective in controlling it.

The one disease common to most iris gardens is "Leaf Spot." It makes its worst outbreak immediately after the flowering season so that, together with the natural dying back of the foliage, the appearance of the plants becomes very unsightly. Remove and burn all the diseased leaves, and if the outbreak is bad, cut off the upper portions of the leaves as you do when transplanting. Then spray with ammoniacal copper carbonate, wettable sulphur or Fermate to check the disease.

Iris which have been particularly successful in San Diego include Snow Flurry (Rees), the

FAITH

When flowers whose petals
Close at sunset, know
They will unfold at dawn
And jasmine and cereus
Bloom in the darkest night
Unafraid.
When seedlings, nestling
Deep in the heart
Of mother earth
Await the call to life
Above the ground
Undismayed.
Should not mortals find
In gardens the faith of
Flowers?

—BYRD CARTER

fine bluish white; Joseph's Mantle, (Craig), which blooms early, late and again in October; Cherie, (Hall), first of the great pinks with tangerine beard, which blooms for me at Christmas and again in April; several of the great Craig oncobreds, Peg Dabagh, Mrs. Douglas Pattison or the loveliest of all blue oncobreds, Frances Craig; and certainly not the least, the great Milliken yellow, Spring Sunshine.

And now the best of luck to you in your effort to grow iris in San Diego.



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Home Landscape Design

By EDWARD F. ROACH

Instructor in Ornamental Horticulture, San Diego Junior College

Learning about gardens is like studying music or painting, in that time spent with the real thing, letting it play on all our senses, is better than hours of talk and analysis. Nevertheless, the creation of the best gardens may be the result of conscious analysis reduced to words. And if our thoughts on gardens soar ahead of our ability to execute, at least they become a fountainhead for progress.

I am indebted to Roland Hoyt, Thomas Church, Garrett Eckbo, Christopher Tunnard and the Sunset garden magazine staff for their excellent books on this subject, which are the sources of much of the material that follows.

Now for the major considerations which underlie the planting of a garden.

I. The People

If sound is an auditory sensation, then the bell which rings alone in the desert, makes no sound. Similarly, a garden has meaning only as it relates to the people who use it. Their number, ages, sex, interests, leisure and pocketbooks must be considered.

II. The Site

In San Diego, where so many magnificent settings for homes and gardens are still undeveloped, there is much room for choice in this important consideration, even on a limited budget. When the house site has been approved for its convenience to work, school and shopping areas, present and future quality of the neighborhood, freedom from traffic noise



and smog conditions, then the garden aspect must be weighed.

A view, trees on the property, good local climate and soil; privacy, so that large window areas may escape the glare of south or west sun; and a spot where the patio can be sheltered from the prevailing winds, are plus qualities for a garden site.

III. Coordination of House and Garden

Joseph Hudnut, of the Harvard School of Design, has written: "The new vision has dissolved the ancient boundary between architecture and landscape architecture. The garden flows into and over the house; through loggias and courts and wide areas of clear glass, and over roofs and sunrooms and canopied terraces. The house reaches out into the garden with walls and terraced inclosures that continue its rhythms and share its grace."

To obtain this objective will take some doing. To utilize his special knowledge, the landscape architect should be called upon to confer with the architect and family, right from the start. *Someone* of the group, with the activities of the family in mind, must be aware of the total possibilities of the site, in order to

capitalize on the opportunities for beauty and usefulness it offers.

IV. Functionalism

When the products of architects and other designers so perfectly suit the purpose for which they are intended that a harmony of parts is achieved, leading to a beauty of form that transcends mere surface decoration, that is functionalism. In landscaping this is also accomplished by the simple, direct solution of problems involved.

The landscape plan that satisfies the need for outdoor enjoyment, convenient entertainment, safety, good circulation, privacy, easy maintenance of plants and garden facilities, adequate parking and service areas, good lighting and protection from sun, wind and rain fulfills the demands of functionalism.

V. Materials

We've been discussing "gardens," without having mentioned plants. "Gardens are for People" as Thomas Church says in the title of his latest book, but everyone knows that a garden is "a plot of ground devoted to the culture of useful or ornamental plants."

San Diego is an especially rewarding place in which to garden because we have such a wide variety of plants here. A leading wholesale nursery lists over 500 species of ornamental trees and shrubs, plus a large number of varieties within these species. When herbaceous materials and

collector's items are added to this, the number of species is in the thousands.

Plants are beautiful in themselves, for color, for textural values, for forms, for shade, shadow and movement. They are interesting, varied and alive. They can also be strictly useful as screens, buffers and ground covers, to prevent erosion. Horticulture can sustain the interest of even the brightest and most persevering individual through a lifetime.

To learn about plants, first study their habitats, observe how they grow wherever you see them, and how they are combined to create beauty in a garden. Roland Hoyt, a master of this kind of observation, has given us an excellent guide to the landscape values of most of the plants we grow, in his book, "Ornamental Plants for Subtropical Regions."

In addition to plants, there are other natural materials to use in the garden. From the sea and mountains of San Diego county, come interesting rocks, boulders, stones, pebbles and contorted branches. Even mounds of earth are effective. Water, in pools, fountains and waterfalls is worthwhile.

Materials and ways to use paving, walls, steps, seats, raised beds, and enclosures are limitless. Sunset's "how to do it" books illustrate many possibilities.

VI. Beauty

Convenience and ease of upkeep are necessary aspects in the making of a garden, but I think we can accept "beauty" as the prime objective and inspiration.

Over the last few hundred years, planners have varied widely in their approach to the creation of beauty in gardens. Some advocated complete imitation of nature. They abhorred straight lines, plans and geometric forms, and took pains to conceal the work of man. The other school took complete control of nature, giving us gardens of formal or bilateral symmetry. The latter trend is expressed today in functionalism, the extension of buildings into the garden and the straightforward use of structures and geometric forms.

Valid criticism can be voiced against each of these points of view. In the semi-arid land of Southern California, a "natural garden" is almost hostile to the needs of man, who usually prefers an oasis. The regimented garden though "honest" does not give us complete satisfaction either. Our controlled activities in cities, our almost exclusive contact with objects, houses and materials that are so often mass produced, leave us with a craving for the forms of natural objects and the activities of living things. The slick house, with its garden extensions, is likely to satisfy only

until the next model comes along.

The best landscaping, past and present, has, in my opinion, stayed somewhere between these two extremes. Many country estates, parks and golf courses earn my praise as works of art on a grand scale, that imitates nature. In a smaller way the Japanese have attained the most satisfying compositions in which nature is refined and cherished, but still present in all her elements.

These examples are worth studying if we are to learn how to humanize our natural surroundings so they will express beauty while serving our living needs.

To me an ideal garden would be open to the sun and stars, the sea and countryside, and be a place where one's daily experiences would echo Kathleen Raine's theme in "Message from Home."

"Now when nature's darkness
seems strange to you,

And you walk, an alien,
in the streets of cities,

Remember earth breathed you
into her with the air,
with the sun's rays,

Laid you in her waters asleep,
to dream

With the brown trout
among the milfoil roots,
From substance of star and
ocean fashioned you,

At the same source, conceived you
As sun and foliage,
fish and stream."

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Leaves from an Observer's Notebook

By Marion Almy Lippitt

Henry came through the garden trundling a wheelbarrow. It bulged bags of fertilizer to be used for the spring refreshing.

"I felt it today," I called to him in an exultant tone. His appearance had interrupted the picking of a bunch of my first freesias.

He continued on his way as if I had not spoken.

"Where's your curiosity?" I called more loudly, thereby sacrificing the exultant tone.

Henry let down the handles of the wheelbarrow and gazed at me preoccupiedly.

"Did you want me?" he asked.

Repeating a spontaneous remark is like shouting a joke into an old-fashioned ear trumpet. The humor is somehow lost in transit. This time the delicacy of an observation became unduly sentimental, instead of remaining twinklingly light. I felt frustrated.

"What did you say?" asked Henry, trying not to look annoyed at being stopped midway on an essential errand. Henry enjoys courtesy, so I repeated my remark—with explanations.

"I said—'I felt it today.' And you were supposed to say 'Felt what?'"

"To which you would reply . . . ?"

"Harukaze No Naka Ni Zasu," I said, watching with delight Henry's surprise at my knowledge of Japanese.

He took out his handkerchief and mopped his brow.

"No savvy," he remarked, waiting with obvious patience for the translation.

"Harukaze No Naka Ni Zasu means 'Ah, the caress of Spring,' or 'The touch of a wise and gentle master.' I gathered it from the book Gayer lent me."

Henry smiled. The world grew gay again.

"The Japanese," he said, "certainly say much in a few words. We Anglo Saxons are heavy and cumbersome in comparison."

"I do believe, though," I observed, "that our appreciation of the other fellow's point of view is our life line. We may not be able to make the original observation so poignantly, but I wonder if our appreciation of another's effort is not deeper than the Oriental's. The Oriental seems always concerned with the way something affects him personally. Could it be that 'Love thy neighbor as thyself' has unconsciously permeated our thinking?"

Henry sat down wearily on the edge of the wheelbarrow as if fatigued by my long dissertation. The wheelbarrow gave its version of rock-and-roll. Unperturbed he balanced himself and asked:

"What else do you know in Japanese?"

"Hana-No-Arika Ye Akorgare No Tabi," I repeated. "It means 'How the eyes of my heart yearn toward the land where the flowers are blooming.' Flowers here, mean Cherry - Blossoms: and Cherry-blossoms mean Japan. So just here I like to follow the quo-

tation with the English translation of a poem by an anonymous Japanese poet:

"At the Gate"

"Scatter your blossoms,
Cherry trees, I pray,
To keep my Friend
still longer at my side.
Quick! with your drifting
Snow of petals hide
The Road by which
he thinks to go away!"

"And if you want to get into the spirit of it all go over and look at our flowering peach trees in Balboa Park."

"You do know the nicest things," said Henry, pulling his beloved eyeshade further over his eyes and rising as if to depart.

"By what brook did you feel the caress of Spring?" he inquired.

"By Marston's cosmetic counter," I replied. "It's lilac time—remember?"

Henry started to trundle off, looking rather disgusted. Departing, he ticked off a flow of stored statistics. "Marston's Department Store in San Diego is the largest single buyer of cut flowers in the United States." He stopped a moment to readjust the bags of fertilizer and finished his remark with:

"In the spring Marston's rota-

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Trees of San Diego

By CHAUNCY I. JERABEK

Editor's note: Chauncy I. Jerabek, recently retired head of Balboa Park Nursery, has been instrumental in introducing many rare trees and shrubs which he grew in the nursery. There he often conducted tours to acquaint garden groups or visiting horticulturists with the growing, blooming and fruiting habits of his unusual plants.

Now Mr. Jerabek has begun the long-time project of making a survey of worthwhile trees in San Diego and listing the locations of well-grown specimens so that anyone interested in a certain tree may see it in mature form and so judge its suitability for his special purpose before planting. When this catalog is completed it will be published as a handbook of "Trees of San Diego." Meanwhile, the author is giving CALIFORNIA GARDEN the privilege of printing the list as it is compiled, thus speeding its usefulness through the files of this magazine.

The following quotations taken from a recent talk on "Trees," given by Mr. Jerabek for the Floral Association, may well serve as an introduction to the survey, which begins in this article.

"Trees set up the landscape and are its most prominent and per-



manent part. Trees and shrubs suited to the San Diego area have always been my special interest. Before selecting a tree, here are some things to think about.

"Plan for a tree before planting. Select a type appropriate for the architecture of the house. If the garden is small, pick a small tree, and never use more than two. Most people overplant, rather than underplant, their gardens.

"The greatest mistake is in planting too close to the house. Keep at least 4 feet from the foundation, for most trees, 8 feet would be better. Plant only where you can dig a good hole, in soil that will allow the roots to expand. San Diego usually has all kinds of soil except the right kind. Remember that soil governs the size of the tree. In good soil, allow more space for the tree.

"Before buying a tree, dig the hole, so the root ball will not dry out waiting to go in, but to prevent accidents, be sure to board over the hole until ready to use it. A tree from a 5 gal. can needs 3 or 4 stakes, 2 x 2 inches, that will extend up a foot or more above the tree. Secure with "figure 8" ties. Watch the ties that they do not restrict the tree as it grows. Trees in the lawn can be fertilized later through deep holes sunk in a circle around the drip line of the outer branches. To keep a tree within bounds, prune as it grows, instead of chopping

it halfway back when it is overgrown.

"There are not enough palms in San Diego. They cost more because it takes, in some cases, 15 months for the seed to sprout, and the rate of growth is correspondingly slow. Contrary to popular opinion, they can be moved in cold weather. They can be transplanted with very little rootstock if care is taken to remove 9/10 of the green leaves before planting. There is enough sap in the trunk to nourish the young leaves while new roots are forming, but not sufficient to take care of the older fronds. I always succeed with a palm that is leaf-pruned. Those who leave the fronds on so they will look well for a dedication, are pretty sure to end up with a dead trunk, instead of a valuable tree.

"The number of native trees in this vicinity is exceptionally small, but the number of introduced ones goes up into the hundreds. The combined native and exotic species give a wide choice of suitable material for any garden. This includes palms, conifers, broad-leaved evergreens and deciduous types, which have extreme diversity in size shape and coloration of foliage, flowers and fruit. The great variation in matured size, the habit of growth, foliage pattern and flowers, make some trees especially well suited to group planting, while others are better for the street or as single specimens."

The following list of trees was described by Mr. Jerabek in his talk. Make it a project to drive around and see well-grown and mature specimens, before selecting your favorite for planting.

tion of daffodils, lilacs, and tulips, iris, peonies, and dogwood is out of this world."

"Ho-U-Wo Abite," I quoted.

"Meaning?" demanded Henry.

"Meaning, 'So like the love of God the sweet rain comes down to make the whole world green.'"

Henry smiled again and said, "I repeat, you do know the nicest things."

Trees of San Diego

CHECK LIST AND LOCATIONS

- Acacia baileyana*, Cootamundra: 3677 Nile; 4383 32nd; 2869 Hawthorne; 4440 Braeburn Rd.
- Acacia decurrens*, var. *dealbata*, Silver-green Wattle: 3631 Nile; 4060 Terrace Ct.; 3068 Grape; 3568 44th.
- Acacia podalyriifolia*, Pearl Acacia: Front yard near N.E. cor. 1328 Dale; 3336 44th.
- Acacia retinoides*; 4205 Biona Rd.; Parkway 3206 41st; 3554 Dwight; 3 in parkway 5003 Hastings Rd.
- Archontophoenix cunninghamia*, (*Seafortia elegans*, Hort.); 4 in parking 3344 Nile; 6 in parkway S.W. cor. Middlesex Dr. and Marlborough; in clumps—2 at 2935 33rd., 3 at 3255 Nutmeg, 3 in lawn, 4380 Ridgeway.
- Araucaria bidwilli*, Bunyabunya: 3686 37th; 3154 B St., in rear yard (27th St.); 1245 Essex; 3786 Van Dyke.
- Araucaria excelsa*, Star Pine; a very beautiful one, 12 ft. high, 5157 Bedford Dr.; same neighborhood, 4305 Ridgeway; 2810 Felton; small one, 2962 Maple; 2427 A St., (Note how branches are held aloft, too large for small space.)
- Betula alba*, White Birch: 4420 32nd; 3 in lawn, 5006 Hastings Rd.; 3 at S.W. cor. of house 3196 Hawthorne.
- Brachychiton populeum*, Bottle Tree: 3675 Myrtle; 4412 32nd; 3676 Van Dyke; parkway 3771 37th.
- Callistemon viminalis*, Bottlebrush: 3536 43rd; 5026 & 5000 Westminster; near garage, 3255 Bancroft.
- Casuarina cunninghamiana*, Beefwood: 3312 Thorn, north of garage; South of Scripps Cottage, S.D. State College; 3062 Grape.
- Casuarina stricta*, Coast Beefwood: 5000 Bristol Rd. in Kensington.
- Cedrus deodara*, Deodar Cedar: 3432 Richmond; 3527 Nile; 2 at 4458 32nd; trimmed formal, 4876 Biona Dr.; 1646 Bancroft; 5040 & 5153 Canterbury Dr.
- Cedrus atlantica*, Atlas Cedar: in Balboa Park, cor. 6th. and Quince.
- Chamaerops humilis*, Mediterranean Palm: 1087 Myrtle Way; 5333 E. Palisades in clumps; west side Gym. Bldg. Balboa Park; beautiful clump growing natural, west of Serra cross, in Presidio Park.
- Cupania anacaedoides*; in Balboa Pk. Nursery grounds; street planting, Allied Gardens, 6600 Cartwright.
- Cupressus forbesi*, Tecate Cypress: west of Open Air Theatre, S.D. State College.
- Draecaena draco*, Dragon Dracena: magnificent specimen, 2404 C St.; S.W. cor. Brooks and Herbert; single trunk, 4107 Hillsdale Rd.
- Eucalyptus citrodora*, Lemon Eucalypt: 4 in front of Original French Laundry, Univ. Ave., near Sears; 1038 32nd; S. of house, 4435 Braeburn Rd.
- Eucalyptus cornuta*, Yate Eucalypt: 4440 Braeburn Rd.; 2 in Balboa Pk., in lawn between Pershing Ave. and Pershing Dr. near Upas St.; N.E. cor. Balboa Club, Balboa Pk.
- Eucalyptus lehmanni*, Lehman's Eucalypt: parkway, 4100 block, Hilldale Rd.
- Eucalyptus ficifolia*, Scarlet Eucalypt: 2826 & 3836 Ivy; 4858 Sussex Dr.; along east side of Pershing Dr. and Golf Links, Balboa Pk.
- Eucalyptus sideroxylon* var. *pal-lens*, Broadleaf Ironbark Eucalypt: 4440 Braeburn Rd.

(To Be Continued)

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San Diego County Orchid Show Saturday & Sunday, March 23 & 24. Recital Hall, Balboa Park.

Rose Show, San Diego Rose Society. Saturday & Sunday, April 13 & 14. Conference Bldg., Balboa Park.

Convention meeting of Pacific Southwest Dist., American Rose Society. Rose judging school.

Coronado Flower Show, Escondido Flower Show. April 20 and 21.

Spring Flower Show La Mesa Woman's Club. April 26 and 27.

Arts, Crafts and Flowers Rancho Santa Fe Garden Club. April 27 and 28.

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More Native Poppies

ETHEL BAILEY HIGGINS

The Golden Poppy can have no rivals from among other members of its family, because we have an added psychological attraction to the *Eschscholtzia*, stemming from the very fact that its beauty and its history have made it our State Flower.

But there are other poppies that deserve a place in our minds and our affections. There are some whose tininess tugs at our hearts; there are those whose stately beauty has an aesthetic appeal, and then again others lay claim to our attention by their sturdy defiance.

One of the flowers dearest to me because of its dainty, rather fragile attractiveness, is *Platystemon californicus*, the Cream Cup. It is like a small edition of a poppy, creamy in its all-over color, but the petals are touched with gold. It used to be quite common, but like so many of our natives, is now seldom seen.

The spectacular member of the family, *Romneya coulteri*, the well-known Matilija Poppy, is well established in cultivation. Its crepe white flowers, six inches or more in diameter, fairly shine. The fact that its white sheen is broken at the center by the yellow stamens, has given it an appellation as a common name, one which I hope you will never use. Call it the Matilija Poppy, and never the "fried egg flower." How can one ever use such a term for such a beautiful flower!

A plant somewhat similar, although smaller, but quite different in other respects, is the *Argemone platyceras*. Its gray-green foliage is in sharp contrast to the dark, rich green of the Matilija Poppy, and is very prickly, giving it the name of Prickly



Dendromecon rigida Tree Poppy
Drawing by Wesley Farmer

Poppy. It grows in arid places towards the desert. I would not suggest its cultivation except in a collection of desert plants. It is sometimes confused with the Matilija Poppy, although I cannot understand that possibility.

A plant, so far as I know, not in cultivation, but which well deserves the honor, is *Dendromecon rigida*, whose common name is the exact translation of its scientific one—Tree Poppy. It is a nice shrub, stiff in manner of growth and in the character of its gray-green foliage and its tidy yellow flowers. The specific name, *regida*, is quite descriptive. The illustration shows its upright charm. It is still quite common, being widely distributed from the coast to the desert.

There remain those somewhat rare members of the family: *Papaver heterophyllum*, the Wind Poppy, and *P. californicum*, the

The Desert

L. B. DIXON

When the late Laurence Belmont Dixon, of Del Mar, was making his striking desert photographs (see CALIFORNIA GARDEN covers for "Spring," 1956 and 1957), some of which have received awards in London and Sacramento, he was also moved to express his feelings in these words, shared with us by Margaret Lord Dixon:

The Desert is all things to all men. To those who visit her in season and with sympathy, she brings peace and reveals unexpected beauty. Those who approach her without understanding are repelled.

Light and shadow are strong on the Desert's rugged face. Desert dawn heralds the pageant of sunrise on the oasis. A shadowed rock, against which an illuminated plant stands revealed, presents a dramatic picture.

The palm is a desert symbol. Arabs say that it lives with its head in the fire and its feet in the water. Desert canyons with water are often palm gardens; narrow ribbons of tropical jungle.

All desert life must be thrifty of water, even man, who may dam a basin in the rocks, to conserve the winter rains. Courage is demanded of desert life. There are brave little flowers which thrive in cracks in sunburned granite crags.

The Desert is prodigal in all her

Western Poppy. They are often found on burns. They seem fragile but they sway, undisturbed, in the wind. They have similar color, a sort of brick-red. But the Western Poppy has a greenish spot at the base of the petals, while the Wind Poppy has a dark spot. They are not at all spectacular.

A Book in the Hand

ADA McLOUTH

NATIVE PLANTS FOR CALIFORNIA GARDENS, by Lee W. Lenz. *Claremont, Calif., Rancho Santa Ana Botanic Garden, 1956. \$3.85.*

Among the valued publications of Rancho Santa Ana Botanic Garden have been the LEAFLETS OF POPULAR INFORMATION, devoted to the botany and horticulture of California plants. Dr. Lenz's book derives from the series of leaflets and represents the experience of some twenty-five years in growing natives, by the trained staff of the Garden.

More than one-third of the flora of our state are endemics; that is, plants growing only in California. This makes California a separate botanical province, comparable to such areas as the Cape of South Africa, or Western Australia. The range of climate, from desert summer, arid heat, to

moods. When spring follows a winter of good rains, she wears a fleeting suit of unbelievable bloom. Forms, bizarre and strange, mingle with the more conventional blossoms.

Constantly changing, yet always the same, the desert dunes symbolize ageless, timeless mystery. Desert airs are restless, often violent. All life bows in suffering before her withering blast of sand.

The Desert is of many moods. When playful, she presents grotesque forms in impish glee. Even the stolid rocks masquerade with her, while on her face she sometimes wears a sardonic smile of mingled farce and drama.

If desert sunrise is spectacular, desert sunset is tender with the mystery of the haze over the ranges.

the permanent snowfields of the Sierra Nevada, variation in rainfall from two to three inches, to over one hundred inches, makes for a wide variety of plant forms, a challenge to the gardener. There is the possibility of using plant material requiring less water than traditional garden plants, by making use of more natives. More knowledge of native plants makes it easy to select the ones that will combine in plantings with exotics from similar habitats.

Included in this book is an outline of the twenty-eight plant communities into which California flora may be grouped. Dr. Munz and Dr. Keck, who worked for years analyzing the plant environments, published the result of their research in *El Aliso* in 1949-50. It is a splendid feature of Dr. Lenz's book to have this brief summary, useful to the gardener and of interest to all who take more than a casual notice of their natural surroundings. For example, the COASTAL STRAND is a plant community extending the length of the state, characterized by plants low or prostrate, such as Sand Verbena and various Mesembryanthemums. The CHAPARRAL is another plant community familiar to San Diegans and extending as far north as Shasta County on dry slopes and ridges of the Coast Ranges.

The chapter, "PROPAGATION AND HANDLING OF NATIVE PLANTS," gives in some detail the practices followed at Rancho Santa Ana, or, may I say, RSABG. If others, besides this reader, have wondered what is John Innes compost, so often referred to in garden books, they will find the formula here, also the formula for U.C. Soil Mix.

Recommended species for garden cultivation fill the bulk of the book. For each plant, shrub, or tree selected, there is a description, origin and history, propagation methods, advice as to garden use. Most of the subjects are illustrated by photographs. Selection of recommended species was on the basis of results at RSABG. Ease of growing was a factor in making the choices, though, in the case of a subject of exceptional worth, such as *Fremontia mexicana*, it is suggested for planting with awareness of its difficulty.

The author and the publisher of this book have done a great service to gardeners and the general public in presenting their selections of plant material together with the most essential botanical and horticultural information.

Most of the photographs are by M. and M. Carothers of La Jolla. Where products are cited the sources are given: e.g.; Vermiculite, Perlite, Sponge-rok.

If you wonder as you wander, perusal of this book may sharpen your perceptions as to native plants in their environments, which they share with us.

FLOWERING TREES AND SHRUBS, by Stanley B. Whitehead. *London and New York, Frederick Warne & Co., 1956. \$3.50.*

In this pleasing, chubby, little volume are described and illustrated 250 species of shrubs and trees.

The shrub, with its many phases, flowering, leafing, fruiting, possibly fragrant, is the "chameleon of the garden, able to enchant us with new facets of character at each season."

Following the introductory chapters as to culture and uses of shrubs in the garden, the selected species are described. The arrangement is by genus; family and common names are also given.

The plates which accompany the text, four illustrations to a page throughout the volume, are from paintings by Miss Joan Lupton. Each description shows the plate number, so it is easy to refer back and forth. A glossary of terms is illustrated with line drawings.

As to trees, the text is limited to those of suitable height, to measure not more than one-third the greatest dimension of the garden. The trees included are, largely, ornamental nuts and fruits, magnolias, berried trees. Large forest trees are not considered.

It is pleasant to note so many of our California native plants in this text devoted to English gardens: Ceanothus, Carpenteria, Manzanita, Sage Brush [sic], Fremontia.

FOYLES HANDBOOKS: HEDGES THEIR PLANTING AND CARE, by Roy Genders, 1956; FLOWER ARRANGEMENT, by Charles Hewitt, 1955; CLIMBING PLANTS IN YOUR GARDEN, by Douglas Bartrum, 1956. *London, W. & G. Foyle; New York, Dover Publications. Each 65 cents.*

Three of the twenty or so Handbooks in Foyles' series have been received for review. Consisting of not more than one hundred pages, with reinforced paper covers, they are fairly sturdy—and inexpensive. For a small outlay one could acquire a set covering the subjects of particular interest.

The author of "Hedges . . ." comparing the hedge to a fence of concrete or wire, mentions the fact that while the wire used for fencing may last a dozen years, "a well-cared-for hedge will retain its beauty for centuries." The photographs show a great variety of hedges, in combinations of different heights, in manor house gardens, and one Tudor knot garden.

Quite seriously, the author says, "a hedge should be planted to last a century at least," and the properly renovated hedge "will be ready to give another quarter century of . . . service."

The hedge may truly link the past and the future, but who thinks in terms of centuries. Let us leave the galloping centuries and turn to "FLOWER ARRANGEMENTS" for something that lasts perhaps a week. The general principles of using flowers in decoration are covered. There are helpful suggestions for freshening and keeping flowers, formulas for preserving, drying, skeletonizing leaves.

"CLIMBING PLANTS" seems especially interesting in its comments on roses. Mermaid is recommended for a wall, as less susceptible to mildew. Comments on the Species Roses are interesting. *Rosa hemisphaeria* is said to be the most beautiful wild rose grown in the British Isles, but difficult to grow there, since it is native to Persia.

Distinctive in format for the price, and admirably edited, are these pocket-sized books. I am going to look for the one on CARNATIONS.

THE MAGIC WORLD OF FLOWER ARRANGING

By MYRA J. BROOKS with MARY ALICE and JOHN P. ROCHE. *New York, Barrows, 1956. \$10.00.*

Here is shown the cooperative effort of a flower arranger and two photographers, all working together to produce desired effects. Mrs. Brooks has presented elements of a flower show, choosing suggestive themes for developing. Actually, she mentions, there is material enough to inspire a number of flower shows, as the plan was to offer as great a variety as possible of themes and treatments.

Each exhibit or group of exhibits is presented with instructions for the class as scheduled; an account of how the problem was worked out; a photograph, in color or black and white, of the exhibit.

In some cases, component parts are photographed separately: as, shells, stands, odd plants and weeds, bits of wood or mineral; then the items assembled in final form.

The pages are large, with ample room for the photographs, with wide margins, or with no margins, eye-pleasing in the variety of spacing. There are sixteen color plates, eighty-five black and white. Lighting techniques are described.

Simple materials from garden, fields, beach, and even from industry are featured. In contrast many of the accessories are rare and elegant.

A section with special appeal is devoted to the problem of suggesting birds in flight by use of plant materials.

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Woody Ground Covers

JANE A. MINSHALL

Landscape Architect, San Diego City Schools

Nowadays, with more and more homes being built on rough, hilly terrain and with emphasis on low cost maintenance, interest in ground covers is ever increasing. Often, a lawn provides the best cover, both practically and aesthetically, as it can be walked on, has a restful texture and can be mowed, weeds and all. However, in many instances, particularly on sloping ground, woody ground covers may succeed where lawns would be impractical. And since we are being encouraged to find ways to save our dwindling water supply, we should perhaps take a closer look at these plants which are less thirsty than lawns.

Shrubby ground covers not only save water but also add color and textural variety to our gardens. Different shades of green and gray foliated plants can be combined to add interest. Fine leafed types can be contrasted with larger leafed varieties. The possibilities are many. Let us examine a few which may be used on steeply sloping or on flat land.

Juniperus conferta, Shore Juniper, forms a low, spreading mat of light blue-green foliage. Hap-piest in the cooler parts of town,

this juniper has fine, needle-like leaves. It combines well with the prostrate form of Natal Plum, *Carissa grandiflora prostrata*. Like its upright growing relative, this low, spreading Natal Plum is sprinkled throughout the year with fragrant, starry white flowers. The shiny red fruits and glossy dark green foliage make this plant one of our most decorative the year around. Both Natal Plum and Shore Juniper are valuable for Christmas decorating.

Speaking of Christmas decorations brings a berried shrub to mind which is especially useful for covering large areas. This is the plant that seems to be the most noticed one at the Education Center, Firethorn or *Pyracantha*. *Pyracantha yunnanensis* was planted at the Education Center, but two fairly new varieties *P. Santa Cruz* and *P. walderi* are just as satisfactory. In order to encourage really flat growth, all vertical branches must be kept nipped off. The bright berries give a splash of cherry color through the winter months, followed by a white carpet of bloom in the spring.

If you have a sunny area blest

with good drainage and are looking for a low spreading shrub, Dwarf Rosemary, with the long name of *Rosmarinus officinalis prostratus*, could be the answer. Its dark green narrow leaves are not only attractive but aromatic. Flowers are light blue. This hardy shrub will get along with little water or fertilizer.

A good tough California native which does an excellent job of holding soil with a minimum of care is the prostrate form of *Baccharis pilularis*, Dwarf Chaparral Broom. Its main attraction is the light, bright green foliage, which contrasts nicely with dark green plants. A good companion for *Baccharis* and equally useful for slope planting is another native son, *Ceanothus griseus horizontalis*, Carmel Creeper. Carmel Creeper has glossy, dark green leaves and blue flowers in clusters in the spring. Since it may attain a twelve foot spread, the plants should not be too closely spaced. Another low growing shrub which asks for little from the gardener is *Cistus corbariensis*, White Rockrose. The rockrose looks well massed with Chaparral Broom and Carmel Creeper, and the single, rose-like flowers cover the plant through the summer.

If you want to cover a large area and are quite sure that lawn is not your best answer, or if you have slope problems, then by all means consider the woody ground covers.

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EDITORIAL BOUQUETS

At long last, an outdoor Garden Center for the Floral Building has been approved by the park authorities and has arrived at the blue-print stage. The capable planning committee: Roland Hoyt, C. I. Jerabek and Frank Quintana, has had several meetings with president, Jean Kenneally. The space behind the Floral Building, with access from the double doors on the east, as well as the kitchen area, has been laid out, and is now awaiting the pleasure of the garden groups as to its implementation.

Many members will recall the beauty of this section when it was enclosed with a grapestake fence and used as the outdoor part of our Chrysanthemum Show.

A paved terrace, where members could enjoy lunch or tea under the towering Lemon Eucalyptus, or picnic suppers in the twilight on balmy nights before the Starlight Operas, would be very much in order.

There is great need for storage space for Show properties of all the garden groups, which could masquerade as false walls or built-in seats and tables. A well-planned potting shed, to be used for demonstration as well as practical purposes would be handy. I would like to see the lawn to the north enclosed within the fenced-in section, in order to give a green foil to the planted area, and a greater sense of space. The outer part of the fence could serve to illustrate the use of climbing vines and espaliered materials.

There is no limit to the ideas that might be worked out for this Garden Center, save that of time and money. We lost the fine Japanese Tea Garden site, after it had been assigned to us, because the Zoo produced concrete plans and the wherewithal, while we were dreaming. Don't let this project slip!

Gerard and Sands

HANDICRAFTS

1268 Prospect St.

La Jolla

For news of local garden activities, listen on the third Thursday of each month, to "Home on the Range," on KFSD, at 12:15. Howard Keddie has been kind enough to reserve that time to interview Mrs. Kenneally. She conveys over the air the same serene charm and understanding that she brings to our meetings. Her graciousness and ability should soon merit a TV "Person to Person" call.

Many of the good garden books, so well reviewed in these columns by Ada McLouth, may be taken out by members at the time of our regular meetings, or on Tuesdays, the day Mrs. Kenneally is at the Floral Building. Alice Greer and Ada are in charge of the library. They are also engaged in making an index for California Garden.

I hope you all appreciate the fine project Mr. Jerabek has undertaken in listing the outstanding trees in San Diego and their locations, and his kindness in allowing us to print them as they are noted. Mr. Jerabek only gives his time to worthwhile enterprises.

The series of lectures on General Gardening, conducted by Ed Roach in the Floral Building, the first three Wednesdays in March, has met with great enthusiasm by new-comers, whom it was hoped to reach. Mrs. Kenneally and Mr. Roach are pleased with the results and may repeat the course again. The Miller camellias, Cosby roses and Carlton cymbidiums made fine desserts after the solid food of the lectures.

TANBARK MULCH

Tanbark has long been desirable as a mulch for the garden, but it has been very difficult to obtain. Now that it is on the market again, it will be a boon to gardeners in the arid southwest. It is unexcelled as a humus that will keep the top soil from caking or eroding. It will not only conserve water but, because of its slightly acid content, will help to offset the alkalinity of the Colorado River water. In two or three years, when it does disintegrate, it adds valuable humus to the soil.

Tanbark is the by-product of the shredded oakbark of the California Tanoak, after it has been used to tan leather. It is washed and dried and completely sterile. It has proved most effective as a soil conditioner around acid-loving plants, such as azaleas, camellias, rhododendrons, fuchsias and begonias. It is also recommended by the Orchid Society as a growing medium for cymbidiums.

Those who are using tanbark find it maintains an uncompressible and resilient ground cover in all weather conditions. Because of the large size of the particles, it does not blow away like sand, peat or shavings. Also it does not stick to the shoes and track indoors. Its attractive red-brown color makes it especially suitable for landscape work, as a ground cover, or for paths and driveways.

Tanbark has always been known as a topping for riding rings, but it is now coming into favor as a surface for playground installations. The Unified School District in Palo Alto has found that it definitely lessened playground accidents.

One cubic yard of tanbark will cover an approximate area of 100 square feet, to a depth of three inches. The bark is sold by the yard because of the variation in weight, due to moisture absorption. Usually two yards constitute a ton in weight. Tanbark dis-

Garden Chores

By ADA PERRY

It looks to me as if we will really garden this summer. A challenge is ringing in the air. Wise use of water is the object of the tournament and everybody gets a chance at the joust. It will be thrilling to tackle the problem with everything we already know and can still learn about growing plants. And most of us have gotten kind of careless about watering in one way or another. It's a fine time to remember the best gardeners we've ever known and how they spent more time with their plants than with the hose. One of the answers is that they knew when their plants needed water, and they were pretty darn sure their plants, instead of the weeds, got the water.

When the Nurserymen met with Frank Smith of the "Don't Waste Water" committee one evening early in the year, the nurseryman for whom I am now working had no difficulty putting the whole situation into a meter box. "We'll have to mulch and cultivate more" he said. It is a fact that not wasting water has been the least of our objectives too often. Well, for the benefit of our young gardeners, a plant that has too much water can be very, very dead, but one that's

courages weed growth but the ground can be treated by a weed killer before covering, if complete protection is desired. A simple header board may be used to confine the bark to walks or drives.

Tanbark is economical because it lasts a long time and prevents the evaporation of water; it is practical because it promotes the health of plants, while holding back weed growth and it is good-looking, because the cultivated appearance of its textured surface makes a fine neat background for all shrubs and trees.

still wanting it can be brought back more often than not.

Peat, good steer manure and bean straw are such effective garden aids that there won't be much strain applying them more often after irrigating. They cut down work as well as water waste, so planning ahead for a good watering followed by more mulch is going to make more time for trips or TV or what you do.

But along with these humus mulches—there are more than I've listed, too—are the soil correctives and acidifiers and the soil penetrants. They often come in the same package and a good thing, too. One releases the minerals the water is detailed to bring to the plants and the other sends the water deeper for deeper root systems and a more friable soil.

We often recommend gypsum for unsticking adobe so we can eventually dig it up, and gypsum also helps to crumble the surface of the adobe areas so that large moisture robbing cracks won't form. I remember with pleasure the adobe upheaval from the trench dug for grapes. A heavy sprinkling of gypsum over the iceslick stuff accounts for the pleasure. In six months it was growing weeds in a mellow, civilized fashion. I bought one of the new type slide back and forth weed-hoes and shortly had some green manure wilting on that refugee from the bottom of a trench, which didn't hurt it either.

Looking back, I notice I didn't mention the biological soil pene-

trants and addenda which make live, active earth which holds more water and does more with it than poor, lifeless soil can. And it should be a great year for liquid fertilizers. These are irrigation as well as food and you are naturally more careful than if you were applying mere water. Before this year, that is. I should mention that liquid fertilizers have been so compounded that they are food, minerals, acidifiers and soil penetrants all in one. A fine bit of streamlining in gardening.

This is going to be a great year for sprinkling cans. Two or three of them sitting around will save dribbling the hose clear over to some little character who for some reason gets all wilted and panting two days before anything else. And those big splashers in my three bird baths are going to have theirs from a can instead of a dripping hose.

There is a trick with that bale of peat you'll have waiting in reserve. A gardener in the top bracket told me he makes a hole in the top of a bale and lets water down into it when he thinks of it. In a couple of weeks or so he has moist peat ready to dip into and no water has run over anywhere.

Here's something to try with dahlia bulbs I can't leave out, even if it changes the subject. You know those new capsules they have put out to fumigate the soil while you and the plant sleep and there's no fuss or bother for either one of you? The capsules get nematodes, grubs, soil mealy bug and any number of pests they formerly couldn't get while the plants were there. So comes in some one to the nursery and says, "I'm going to put one of these a couple of inches under every dahlia bulb I plant this year. Friend of mine tried it and it worked fine, he says." I can't think of a reason why it wouldn't be just dandy, though maybe the directions could be followed a little more closely.

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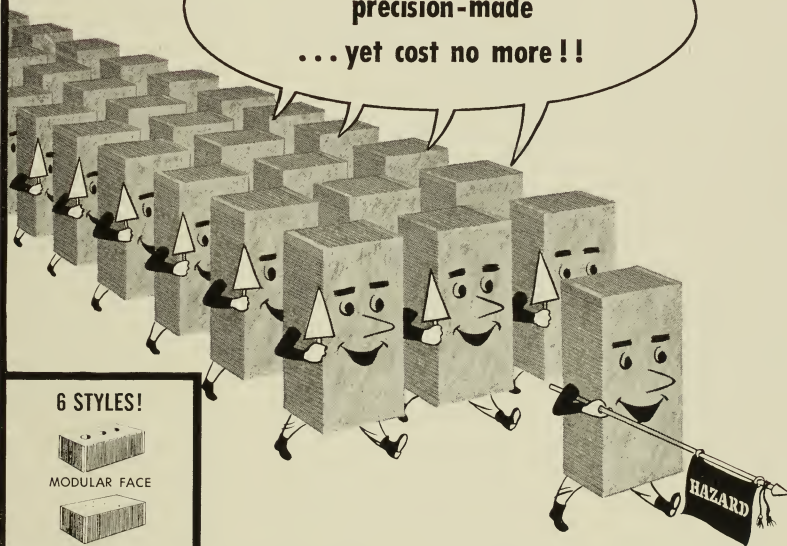
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